



Module 9: AR WIC - Talking With Mothers About Breastfeeding... When Mother and Baby Are Separated

HANDOUT 9.1 SEPARATION SCENARIOS

For each of the situations below, list three affirming statements you could say to a mother, three open-ended questions to help explore her situation, and three anticipatory guidance messages you could share with her to help her create a plan to continue breastfeeding.

1. Liz is a 20-year-old college student and the mother of a two month old. She is going back to school full-time in two weeks.
2. Kimberly is returning next week to work full-time at a large retail store after a four-week maternity leave.
3. Marta is going to be in her sister's wedding this weekend. She has a four-month-old exclusively breastfed baby.
4. Barb was just readmitted to the hospital six weeks postpartum for emergency gall bladder surgery.
5. Cassie is a 26 year-old mother of two. She just delivered a 34-week old premature baby.



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HANDOUT 9.1 SEPARATION SCENARIOS RESPONSES TO CONSIDER

1. Liz is a 20-year-old college student and the mother of a two month old. She is going back to school full-time in two weeks.
 - Affirming Statements
 - *How wonderful that you have been breastfeeding!*
 - *You're a great mom to be giving your baby such a good start in life.*
 - *Lots of mothers have felt a little overwhelmed thinking about going to school and breastfeeding.*
 - Open-Ended Questions
 - *What are your breastfeeding goals?*
 - *How has breastfeeding been going so far?*
 - *Tell me more about your school schedule.*
 - Anticipatory Guidance
 - *How baby might respond to accepting other feeding methods at this age.*
 - *How supplementation affects her overall milk production.*
 - *How baby's feeding cycles may change once she is apart from baby.*
2. Kimberly is returning next week to work full-time at a large retail store after a four-week maternity leave.
 - Affirming Statements
 - *How wonderful that you have been breastfeeding!*
 - *You're a great mom to be giving your baby such a good start in life.*
 - *Lots of mothers have worried about returning to work and continuing to breastfeed.*
 - Open-Ended Questions
 - *What is your work schedule going to be like?*
 - *What thoughts have you had about continuing to breastfeed after you return to work?*
 - *What are your breastfeeding goals?*
 - Anticipatory Guidance
 - *How supplementation affects her milk production.*
 - *Preparing for milk expression once she is back at work.*
 - *How baby's feeding cycles may change once she is apart from baby.*



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3. Marta is going to be in her sister's wedding this weekend. She has a four-month-old exclusively breastfed baby.
 - Affirming Statements
 - *Your baby is very lucky to have received your milk for four months!*
 - *It's great you have given your baby such a good start in life.*
 - *Lots of mothers have worried about being apart from their baby.*
 - Open-Ended Questions
 - *What will some of the activities of this weekend entail?*
 - *Who will be caring for your baby while you are away, and what have they been telling you about breastfeeding?*
 - *What ideas have you already been considering?*
 - Anticipatory Guidance
 - *How baby might respond to accepting other feeding methods at this age.*
 - *How missing feedings might affect her own comfort. .*
 - *Effect of alcohol she may consider ingesting may affect breastfeeding if her baby is with her.*
4. Barb was just readmitted to the hospital six weeks postpartum for emergency gall bladder surgery.
 - Affirming Statements
 - *This must seem very overwhelming right now. Any mother would be worried.*
 - *What a great mother to have given your baby such a good start in life through breastfeeding!*
 - *It's great you are focused on taking care of yourself right now. That's important.*
 - Open-Ended Questions
 - *What has the doctor told you about keeping your breasts drained?*
 - *How do your breasts feel right now?*
 - *What are the things that worry you most about right now?*
 - Anticipatory Guidance
 - *The domino effect that can occur when breasts are not drained.*
 - *Options for milk expression by the mother or a caregiver.*
5. Cassie is a 26 year-old mother of two. She just delivered a 34-week old premature baby.
 - Affirming Statements
 - *Lots of mothers have been in your shoes.*
 - *It's great you are considering giving your baby your milk.*
 - *It's normal to feel scared right now.*
 - Open-Ended Questions



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- *What has the baby's doctor said about breastfeeding?*
- *What have you heard about how breastfeeding affects premies?*
- *Tell me about your plans once you go home from the hospital.*
- Anticipatory Guidance
 - *Expressing milk early and often will help build milk production.*
 - *WIC provides special support for mothers of premature babies, including provision of a high quality breast pump.*



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HANDOUT 9.2 ALL IN A DAY'S WORK

Instructions:

Think about job settings unique to your community where a WIC mother might work. Consider the potential barriers she might face in that setting combining working and breastfeeding, and how that might impact breastfeeding. Are there any solutions you can consider offering her?

Work Setting	Barriers	Impact on Breastfeeding	Solutions



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HANDOUT 9.3

SHOW ME VIDEO VIGNETTES:

TALKING ABOUT BREASTFEEDING WITH WORKING MOTHERS

As you listen to this counseling encounter between a breastfeeding WIC mother and a WIC staff member, jot down some notes on the following:

1. The questions the counselor asks to find out more about the mother's situation.
2. The affirmations she uses to help the mother feel more confident about her milk production.
3. The information that she shares.
4. What would you have said differently?
5. What could you see incorporating into your counseling with WIC mothers?



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HANDOUT 9.4 APPLICATION TO PRACTICE: BACK TO WORK

Lela is in for WIC services following the birth of her first child, born 2 weeks ago. Breastfeeding is going well, but she is concerned that she may not be able to continue breastfeeding after returning to work at a discount store in her community. She would like to go ahead and get formula from WIC now so she can “do both.”

1. Write 1-2 open-ended questions you could ask to learn more about Lela’s situation.
2. What do you think Lela’s primary worries might be?
3. What do you think Lela needs to hear most from you?
4. What options would be most helpful for her?
5. What do you want her to know about WIC food package options at this point?
6. What follow-up options and resources would be helpful to share with Lela?



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HANDOUT 9.4

APPLICATION TO PRACTICE: BACK TO WORK

RESPONSES TO CONSIDER

1. Write 1-2 open-ended questions you could ask to learn more about Lela's situation.
 - *Tell me more about what you think your typical work day might be like.*
 - *What have you heard about using a breast pump?*
 - *What has your employer said to you about breastfeeding after you return to work?*
2. What do you think Lela's primary worries might be?
 - *Making enough milk after she returns to work*
 - *Approaching her supervisor who may or may not be supportive*
 - *Retaining her job if her supervisor or co-workers feel breastfeeding is interfering with her ability to do a good job*
 - *Embarrassment discussing her breastfeeding needs*
 - *Getting support from her family who might care for her baby while she is away*
3. What do you think Lela needs to hear most from you?
 - *Many WIC mothers successfully combine breastfeeding and working*
 - *WIC provides support to working mothers, including providing a quality breast pump and peer counselors who can help her work breastfeeding into her life*
 - *Beginning formula so soon will negatively affect her milk production; exclusively breastfeeding for the first few weeks will give her more options for feeding once she is ready to return to work*
4. What options would be most helpful for her?
 - *Strategies for building milk production in the early weeks before returning to work.*
 - *How to talk to her supervisor and her family about her breastfeeding needs.*
5. What do you want her to know about WIC food package options at this point?
 - *She will receive many more foods and for a full year if she exclusively breastfeeds.*
6. What follow-up options and resources would be helpful to share with Lela?
 - *Postpartum breastfeeding mother's support group*
 - *Peer counselor support*



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HANDOUT 9.5

APPLICATION TO PRACTICE: HOSPITALIZED INFANT

Akira came into your WIC clinic today to enroll. She was discharged from the hospital yesterday but she sadly reports that her baby twins had to stay behind and she begins to cry. Her babies came early at only 32 weeks, and they will remain in the hospital NICU for several weeks. She was told she should get a breast pump from WIC, but is not sure whether this will work for her.

1. Assess: What more do you want to know from Akira? Write 1-2 open-ended questions to help you get that information.
2. Affirm: What supportive words can you offer to Akira to affirm her fears and concerns?
3. Inform: What information does she need to hear?
4. Inform: List 2-3 support options available through WIC that might be helpful for her.
5. Yield: Who else can provide help to Akira at WIC or in the community?



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HANDOUT 9.5

APPLICATION TO PRACTICE: HOSPITALIZED INFANT

RESPONSES TO CONSIDER

1. Assess: What more do you want to know from Akira? Write 1-2 open-ended questions to help you get that information.
 - *Tell me more about what the doctors are telling you about the babies and breastfeeding.*
 - *What have you heard about using a breast pump?*
 - *Tell me about some of your plans while the babies are in the NICU.*
2. Affirm: What supportive words can you offer to Akira to affirm her fears and concerns?
 - *I can tell what a good mother you are to be so concerned.*
 - *This is definitely hard, and it can be scary when they are so tiny.*
3. Inform: What information does she need to hear?
 - *Breastfeeding can be a life-saver for premature babies.*
 - *Lots of mothers have successfully used a breast pump for their premature babies.*
 - *WIC can assist by providing a quality breast pump.*
4. Inform: List 2-3 support options available through WIC that might be helpful for her.
 - *Postpartum support group*
 - *Peer counselor*
5. Yield: Who else can provide help to Akira at WIC or in the community?
 - *WIC Breastfeeding Contact Person*
 - *WIC Peer Counselor*
 - *Local La Leche League support group*